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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY: Poland

DATE DISTR: September 1953

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. No dredging operations were seen between Swinemunde and Steinbruchhafen as [redacted] ship was under way to Stettin where she docked at Steinbruchhafen. This harbor had a concrete quay wall about 250 meters long, which had a sand dam at its end, but no crane installations. [redacted] ship loaded with own gear 184 standards of squared timber of Czech origin from a lumber yard at the harbor basin. The timber was brought alongside on small-gauge trucks operated by Polish workers.
2. No shore leave was granted to the crew of [redacted] ship which was guarded by two Polish soldiers who wore earth-brown uniform, overcoat and a green-rimmed cap. They checked all Polish workers boarding the ship, collecting their identity cards which were returned when the workers left ship. These longshoremen were between 30 and 40 years old and were discontent. Some expressed hopes for an improvement of their living standards after the completion of the 6-Year Plan. The tallymen were young men who, according to one of them had been given 5 years of nautical and navigational training in a school in Gdynia and were then assigned to the Stettin Labor Office and were employed as dockers until induction into the Polish Army. They allegedly included 600 tallymen of this category working in the Stettin harbor zone. They had walked the deck of a ship only during a short period of training aboard a school ship in Gdynia. After completion of 3 years of military service, they were allowed to sign up on merchant ships.¹
3. On the evening of [redacted] an intensive flashing glare, interrupted by dark smoke clouds, was observed in a northeasterly direction about 2,000 meters from [redacted] ship which was berthed in Steinbruchhafen. No reports of explosions were heard.²
4. A Norwegian steamer unloaded potash in the adjoining harbor basin (basen Warty). When [redacted] ship passed the Basen Kaszubski, one Soviet ship, one German ship, one Finnish ship, and one Swedish steamer were seen, loading coal and mixed cargo from Czech barges. At 3:30 p.m. [redacted] ship cast off from the quay. No dredging operations or shipping traffic was observed when [redacted] ship passed the Kaiserfehrt (lagoon channel between the Oder River and Swinemunde) in both directions.

[redacted] Comment. The training of Polish seamen described by the tallyman was reported for the first time and is doubted, as it is improbable that with alleged 5 years of training (from 1947 to 1952), a total of 600 men should work in Stettin alone. This would imply that the Polish merchant fleet would go without any new crop, which is not correct since the Polish merchant ships are manned by young sailors who evidently received professional training after the war.

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[redacted] Comment. Judging from the direction and distance of the place reported [redacted] the place of the fire probably was on the Dommache See (Lake) at about the western tip of the Sallun meadows. As no fuel storages or other inflammables located there are known, there also is the possibility that a fishing cutter or barge was destroyed by fire or [redacted] a mistake in estimating the distance and that actually the fire was near Ernimswalde, where, according to unconfirmed information, a military airfield is located.

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